I am a songwriter, concerned citizen, and media consumer. I aminterested in the greatest possible diversity in American cultural life, as
a safeguard for democracy and against tyranny. I listen to radio, but find TV so vacuous or obnoxious that I rarely watch.

The last thing the FCC should do is rely in 2004 on market forces to regulate the use of the public airwaves. Thanks to Michael Powell's views, the concentration of power in the media has grown to the point where one can well question the future of democracy, since democracy depends on a well-informed public. A well-informed public depends on a diversity of opinion in the media. Similarly, music will be dominated by a few, very dominant, forces unless local stations are required to prove that they are serving local interests. This used to be a conservative position... Not under the present administration.

All programming decisions MUST be made at the local station level. Local programmers will know best what the local people want to hear. The alternative is homogenized, "fast food" in music nationally.

All programs should be subject to the local programming rule: give the local people what they want to hear and see in all areas of broadcasting. Do everything possible to lessen the influence of national media conglomerates.

These activities should count.

Payola should be banished, punished, and made too dangerous to exist. The problem lies in lax enforcement and punishment of those guilty of payola. No one should be able to pay to get anything on the air.

Get rid of voice-tracking. It's dishonest.

Get rid of national playlists.

Low power FM radio licenses sound like a good idea. Break up broadcasting into the smallest units possible.

Thank you for addressing these issues with an invitation for public comment. The most important change, however, would be the replacement of Michael Powell as the Chairman of the FCC with someone who cares about diversity and the necessity of splitting up the concentration of power in the media, for the sake of democracy.